



CITY OF LODI

COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

AGENDA TITLE: Approve Naming of the Baseball Field at Kofu Park in honor of Masato "Mauch" Yamashita

MEETING DATE: August 21, 2002

PREPARED BY: Parks and Recreation Director

RECOMMENDED ACTION: The the Council approve naming of the baseball field at Kofu Park in honor of Masato "Mauch" Yamashita.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: Masato "Mauch" Yamashita is a long-time player, coach, manager and administrator for the baseball club that represents the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) in play throughout California. Mr. Yamashita began playing for the Lodi team in 1939, but this team was disbanded when he was a junior at Lodi High and was sent to a relocation camp. He continued to play baseball on a camp team until he was drafted.

Following his service with the highly decorated 442 Regimental Combat Team, which fought in Italy, he returned to Lodi and continued playing baseball. He was asked by Mas Okuhara to become the player-coach during the 1950's. Mr. Yamashita pays for all team expenses, including diamond rental, equipment, umpires, and transportation costs, and refuses reimbursement from the Lodi JACL.

Kofu Park is named after our sister city in Japan, and speaking in support of this action at the Parks and Recreation Commission included the Lodi Sister City Committee, the Lodi Japanese American Citizens League and other local citizens. The naming of this ball field as Masato "Mauch" Yamashita Field represents our admiration of his personal efforts with a team that has represented Lodi over the decades, and honors the many players and assistant coaches that have been a part of this organization.

FUNDING: This action has no financial impact upon the City.

Handwritten signature of Roger Baltz.

Roger Baltz
Parks and Recreation Director

Prepared by Michael S. Reese, Recreation Supervisor

RW/msr

cc: City Attorney

APPROVED: _____

Handwritten signature of H. Dixon Flynn.
H. Dixon Flynn -- City Manager

08/13/02

Dennis D. Morita, CPA

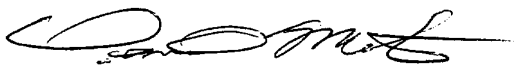
404 W. Pine St., Suite 7
PO Box 149
Lodi Ca 95241
(209) 368-5324
(209) 368-5326

My name is Dennis Morita, I am a Certified Public Accountant located at 404 West Pine Street, Lodi, Ca., and I reside at 1778 LeBec Ct., Lodi, Ca. I am a native Lodian and have been blessed to have been able to participate in the many youth athletic programs offered by the City of Lodi. I remember being mentored by Ed DeBenedetti as a youngster in youth baseball and I played four years of football and baseball for Lodi High under such great coaches as John Giannoni, Bob Pfierini, and Gene Wellman. And when I went to college I had the privilege of playing baseball for the Lodi JACL and coach Mauch Yamashita for several years.

Coach Yamashita instilled the same level of sportsmanship, hard work, dedication, integrity and honor that epitomizes the Lodi area sports programs. Coach Yamashita coached us to two State Nisei AA League Championships in 1962 and 1963, but above all he taught us the important values of sportsmanship, hard work, and giving your all which carried on for the rest of our lives. Coach Yamashita loves baseball. He stressed to us the importance of having fun while playing the game. And like all great coaches, he emphasized, not the winning or the losing, but the important lessons that are learned from the winning and the losing. He taught us that you can always be proud, regardless of the outcome, if you have tried your very best! The lessons taught by Coach Yamashita and others like him carried us on into the real world where we learned that a failure was just another moment in time and success would come if we continued.

Coach Yamashita has been a player, a coach, and a role model for many young men over the past half century. We are fortunate to still have him actively coaching and forever giving back to the community and the sport that he dearly loves. His name on the Kofu Park ball field not only would honor him but also would bring honor to this city for recognizing someone who is still an active role model for our young ones in this great city of ours.

Respectfully,



Dennis D Morita

August 6, 2002

LADIES & GENTLEMEN OF THE COMMISSION:

GOOD EVENING, MY NAME IS DENNIS MORITA, I AM A FORMER BASEBALL PLAYER WHO PLAYED FOR COACH YAMASHITA. I AM HERE BEFORE YOU THIS EVENING REPRESENTING THREE GENERATIONS OF BASEBALL PLAYERS WHO HAVE PLAYED ON A LODI TEAM DATING BACK TO THE LATE 1930'S AND IS STILL GOING STRONG. THE TEAM HAS FOR MANY OF THOSE YEARS BEEN SPONSORED BY THE LODI JACL, A NON-PROFIT COMMUNITY SERVICE ORGANIZATION, AND HAS CARRIED THE LODI JACL NAME COMPETING WITH BASEBALL TEAMS THROUGHOUT THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA. THE LODI TEAM HAS HELD THEIR LOCAL GAMES AND STATE TOURNAMENTS IN THE CITY OF LODI AND CURRENTLY ACTIVELY COMPETES IN THE DOUBLE A STATE LEAGUE.

OUR PURPOSE HERE THIS EVENING IS TO REQUEST THAT THE KOFU PARK BASEBALL FIELD BE GIVEN A NAME REPRESENTING THIS ESTABLISHED SEGMENT OF THE LODI COMMUNITY AND ITS 60 PLUS YEARS OF JAPANESE AMERICAN BASEBALL PLAYERS. TO REPRESENT THE LODI BASEBALL PLAYERS, WE ARE REQUESTING THE BASEBALL FIELD AT KOFU PARK BE GIVEN THE NAME TO A LONG-TIME NATIVE LODIAN, A PLAY AS WELL AS A COACH FOR OVER 60 YEARS, AND STILL ACTIVELY COACHING AT THE AGE OF 77, MAUCH YAMASHITA.

MAUCH YAMASHITA IS A LONG-TIME RESIDENT OF LODI, A LOCAL BUSINESSMAN WHO WITH HIS PARTNER BILL KAGAWA PURCHASED THE PINE AUTO SUPPLY STORE IN 1961. MAUCH ATTENDED LODI HIGH SCHOOL AND SERVED IN THE "FAMED" 442ND REGIMENTAL COMBAT UNIT AND IS A PURPLE HEART RECIPIENT.

BUT MOST OF ALL...MAUCH LOVES BASEBALL AND LOVES COMPETING IN BASEBALL GAMES!!

MAUCH HAS TRULY BEEN A DEDICATED BASEBALL MANAGER AND COACH FOR MANY YEARS. THERE ARE NO COMMITTEES, NO BOARDS, NO SPONSORSHIPS. HE HAS SINGLE-HANDEDLY SUPPLIED EQUIPMENT AND UNIFORMS, PAID FOR BALL FIELD & UMPIRE FEES, TRAVEL COSTS, AND FOOD, ALL FROM HIS OWN PERSONAL FUNDS, REFUSING TO BE REIMBURSED!!

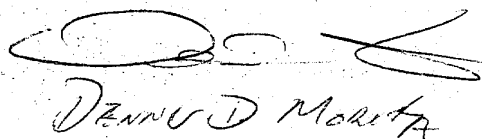
MAUCH HAS NOT ONLY BEEN A COACH, BUT A MENTOR, A FATHER FIGURE AND A FRIEND TO HIS BALL PLAYERS THESE 50 ODD YEARS. HIS DEDICATION AND COMPASSION FOR THE SPORT HAS BEEN TO THE BENEFIT OF THESE YOUNG MEN WHO PLAY EACH YEAR. MANY LOCAL YOUNG MEN HAVE PASSED THROUGH THE RANKS, MOSTLY OF JAPANESE DESCENT BUT INCLUDING A MIXTURE OF SPANISH, CHINESE, FILIPINO, ITALIAN, AND GERMAN DESCENT....TRULY AN "ALL AMERICAN" TEAM!!!

MAUCH'S INVOLVEMENT IN BASEBALL AS A PLAYER AND COACH IN LODI CAN BE TRACED BACK TO 1939 WHEN HE PLAYED FOR THE LODI WANJI'S B TEAM. THESE YEARS INCLUDED PLAYING IN LODI BEFORE WW II AS A TEENAGER, DURING THE INTERNMENT CAMP YEARS, AND AFTER HIS RETURN TO LODI DURING THE POST-WAR PERIOD. MAUCH YAMASHITA WAS ONE OF THOSE NISEI, SECOND GENERATION JAPANESE AMERICAN LEGENDS, WHO WAS PAIDED TRIBUTE TO IN 1996 AT CANDLESTICK PARK AT THE GIANTS BASEBALL GAME. AMONG THOSE WERE ALSO LODIANS NOBI MATSUMOTO, BILL KAGAWA AND SHIG KABA.

MAUCH YAMASHITA NOT ONLY WELL REPRESENTS A LONG-TIME BASEBALL PLAYER/COACH IN THE CITY OF LODI, BUT THE JAPANESE AMERICAN FACTION OF THE COMMUNITY THAT HAS CONTRIBUTED TO THE BUSINESS AND SOCIAL ASPECTS THROUGH THE YEARS BY THEIR ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN THE PROSPERITY AND GROWTH OF THIS CITY AND COUNTY, THEIR INVOLVEMENT IN PROFESSIONAL AND SOCIAL SERVICES, THROUGH THEIR AGRICULTURAL CONTRIBUTION IN RANCHES AND VINEYARDS SURROUNDING THE CITY, AND THROUGH THEIR COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERISM AND SUPPORT IN NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS.

WE THEREFORE ARE SUGGESTING THAT IT WOULD BE FITTING FOR THE BALL FIELD TO BE GIVEN A NAME THAT REPRESENTS THIS ASIAN FACTION OF THE COMMUNITY. WE ARE RESPECTFULLY REQUESTING THAT THE LODI PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION APPROVE AND RECOMMEND TO THE CITY COUNCIL AT THE NEXT CITY COUNCIL MEETING, THE NAMING OF THE FIELD AT KOFU PARK, "THE MAUCH YAMASHITA BASEFIELD FIELD.

THANK YOU FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK BEFORE YOU.



Dennis Morita

JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE

Lodi Chapter

August 6, 2002

Lodi Parks and Recreation Commission
125 N. Stockton Street
Lodi, CA 95240

RE: Support in naming the ball field at Kofu Park in honor of Mr. Mauch Yamashita

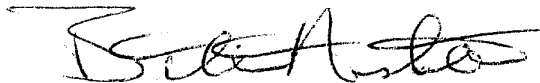
The Lodi Chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League has been approached from members of its chapter as well as members of the community in support of naming the ball field at Kofu Park in honor of Mr. Mauch Yamashita.

As a result, the Lodi Chapter JACL Board of Directors at its June 11, 2002 meeting adopted a motion to support the naming of the Kofu Park Ball Field to Mauch Yamashita Ball Field, and directed the President of the Chapter to communicate to the Lodi Parks and Recreation Commission its endorsement and support.

The Lodi JACL supports the request to name the playing field at Kofu Park after Mr. Masato "Mauch" Yamashita, and therefore, urges the Parks and Recreation Commission to endorse its request to recommend the naming of the playing field in honor of his dedication to baseball. No greater honor could represent the gratitude expressed for his support of the Lodi JACL Baseball Club, and of the legacy he has established for Lodi.

Your consideration to forward this recommendation to the Lodi City Council is sincerely appreciated.

Sincerely,



Bill Hinkle
President
Lodi Chapter JACL

RESOLUTION NO. 2002-177

A RESOLUTION OF THE LODI CITY COUNCIL
NAMING THE KOFU PARK BASEBALL FIELD THE
"MASATO 'MAUCH' YAMASHITA FIELD"

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NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council of the City of Lodi does hereby name the Kofu Park Baseball Field the "Masato 'Mauch' Yamashita Field."

Dated: August 21, 2002

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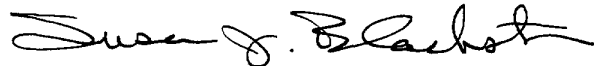
I hereby certify that Resolution No. 2002-177 was passed and adopted by the City Council of the City of Lodi in a regular meeting held August 21, 2002, by the following vote:

AYES: COUNCIL MEMBERS – Hitchcock, Howard, Land, Nakanishi, and Mayor Pennino

NOES: COUNCIL MEMBERS – None

ABSENT: COUNCIL MEMBERS – None

ABSTAIN: COUNCIL MEMBERS – None



SUSAN J. BLACKSTON
City Clerk

E-7



LODI, CALIFORNIA
KOFU, JAPAN
LODI, ITALY

SISTER CITY COMMITTEE

July 23, 2002

Lodi Parks and Recreation Commission
125 N. Stockton Street
Lodi, CA 95240

**RE: SUPPORT IN NAMING THE BALL FIELD AT KOFU PARK IN HONOR OF
MAUCH YAMASHITA**

At its meeting of June 25, 2002, the Lodi Sister City Committee heard a presentation from members of the community supporting the naming of the ball field at Kofu Park in honor of Mauch Yamashita.

During the war, Mr. Yamashita started a baseball league in the relocation camp. After joining the military, he was part of the highly decorated 442nd, fighting in Italy.

Following the war, Mauch returned to Lodi and was handed the Lodi Athletic Club (later known as the JACL Baseball Club), and has led the team to this day. Mauch accepts no money from the JACL, and he pays for field rentals, umpires, equipment, and feeding the players.

The Lodi Sister City Committee supports the request to name the playing field at Kofu Park (named for Lodi's Sister City, Kofu, Japan) after Mr. Masato "Mauch" Yamashita as he has and continues to represent Lodi's Japanese ball players throughout these many years.

The Committee urges the Parks and Recreation Commission to endorse this request and to recommend the naming of the playing field in honor of Mauch to the Lodi City Council.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Bill Hinkle
President
Lodi Sister City Committee

BH/JMP

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